(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) its impact on public sector airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Government has permitted Jet Airways to operate services in India — Gulf Region *w.e.f.* 1st January, 2008 to Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain. As Government does not regulate fares, it is for the airline to decide fares as per its commercial judgement and compete with the other airlines, including the public sector airlines, operating on these routes.

Theft of baggage of air passengers

174. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent incidents of theft of valuables from the baggages of passengers after the security check-in of various airlines;

(b) if so, the details of such incidents reported during last two years and number of cases solved so far;

(c) whether the airlines have taken any steps to curb such incidents of theft and to compensate the victims; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) While information regarding incidents of thefts is being collected from all airlines, to curb such incidents, all loaders are frisked thoroughly before and after the loading, vigilance has been enhanced at airports, loading/unloading of checked-in baggage is done under supervision of security, automated In-line Baggage X-Ray Screening system is being introduced at major airports.

In case of lost baggages, scheduled doemstic airlines provide compensation to passengers as per their company policy.

Modernization of Airports in Punjab

175. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the ongoing projects for modernization and upgradation of civil airports in Punjab;

(b) the expenditure proposed to be incurred thereon during the current financial year, airport-wise; and

(c) by when the work of modernization and upgradation is likely to be completed, airport-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) At present, Amritsar airport in Punjab is being modernized and upgradation at a cost of Rs. 61.50 crore during the current financial year.

(c) The work of modernization and upgradation of Amritsar airport is likely to be completed by March, 2008.